

Tell, don't show or: Blacking up

Written by

Daniel Soelberg

Email: irregularidades@gmail.com
Phone: +45 50 18 50 67

FADE IN:

INT. BLACK&WHITE PUBLISHING - DAY

A long line of empty cubicles leads up to two closed executive offices at the end.

The employees have formed a circle in the middle of the room, preparing for a Team-Building exercise.

Inside the circle stands a slightly overweight and altogether handsome, British-Nigerian man, BLACK TEMI (40s), who speaks English with an accent.

There's a blurry figure behind him.

Temi folds his arms and shuts his eyes.

T-B CONSULTANT (OS)

Very good, now lean back.

Temi doesn't move.

T-B CONSULTANT (OS) (CONT'D)

Let yourself fall and I'll catch you.

Temi stays frozen.

CO-WORKER (OS)

Go on Temi. You've got this.

CLAPPING

CHEERING

Temi rests his arms and opens his eyes.

SILENCE

He turns around and shakes his head in apology.

Then he retreats to his cubicle.

ACTION PACKED MUSIC

The Co-workers look worried on his behalf.

Temi rests his head in his hands.

EXT. OLNEY, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE - NIGHT

GRAVE OF JOHN NEWTON

An activist carries both a black and white spray paint canister.

He sprays the grave stone black.

He looks around, readies the white canister and writes:

"DUKE OF ARGYLE"

MUSIC FADES OUT

INT. SUPERMARKET - NIGHT

The large store is almost empty.

NON-FOOD AISLE

Temi fills his shopping basket.

CHECKOUT

A bored CHECKOUT GIRL studies her forefinger.
She's white with purple dreadlocks.

A white SECURITY GUARD walks past her, heading in
Temi's direction.

NON-FOOD AISLE

Looking through his shopping list, Temi feels a sudden
urge to turn around.

The guard lurks a few feet behind him. Piercing eyes.

Temi lifts up his summer jacket and smiles playfully.

The guard walks away.

BIP

CHECKOUT

The teenager scans the groceries.

BIP

Temi notices that she's protecting her forefinger.

BIP

She picks up on his peeking.

CHECKOUT GIRL
I was up all night drawing
skeletons.

BIP

Temi perks up.

BLACK TEMI
May I see?

She gives him an odd look. Then she shows him the finger in question.

BLACK MARTIN
No-no, I meant the sketches.

CHECKOUT GIRL
Oh--

Temi gives her a business card.

She looks at it: "BLACK&WHITE PUBLISHING"

BLACK TEMI
Drop them by my office sometime, if
you feel like spinning the wheel.

CHECKOUT GIRL
They're not coloured in or anything.

BLACK TEMI
Doesn't matter.

Temi pays up.

BLACK TEMI (CONT'D)
See you.

CHECKOUT GIRL
See you... for who you are!

Temi coughs up a quick laugh.

She smiles.

He heads for the door.

The security guard cuts in front of him just before the exit.

SECURITY GUARD
(provocatively)
I beg your pardon.

Temi keeps his cool.

EXT. TUBE INNVESTMENT HOUSE, BIRMINGHAM - NIGHT

STATUE OF JOSEPH STURGE

A male BLACK SPEAKER addresses the mixed crowd.

They're drinking overloads of water.

BLACK SPEAKER
This is a man who would have housed
black people, so long as it paid;

A man who involved himself in the
problems of poor whites, while
unpaid black people were beaten
still;

A man with a warped sense of
immediatism.

CROWDS ROAR

The speaker straightens his back and breathes in.

BLACK SPEAKER
(shouting)
Cocks out. Ladies avert your eyes.

Twenty or so demonstrators surround the statue.

ZIPS ZIP

BLACK SPEAKER
Take aim.

DRUMROLL

They lean back, aiming high.

BLACK SPEAKER (CONT'D)

Fire.

LOUD PEEING

INT. BLACK&WHITE PUBLISHING - DAY

CUBICLE

Temi looks busy although the screen is blank.

FOOTSTEPS

A white woman, WHITE BOSS (50s), approaches with a manuscript in her hand.

Temi looks up.

BLACK TEMI

How'd it go Boss?

She tilts her head.

WHITE BOSS

I postponed it. Think you should go.

BLACK TEMI

Why?

WHITE BOSS

Makes more sense, to them at least.
Besides you were the one who worked on it.

She dumps the stack of papers on his desk.

BLACK TEMI

So you need me to cut the wings of controversy.

WHITE BOSS

Sorry Temi.

BLACK TEMI

It's all right.

She puts her hand on his shoulder.

WHITE BOSS

Next month, okay?

Temi nods.

She takes her leave.

He flicks through the script.

It's filled with blank pages, although he seems to see something in them.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

It's quiet. Only parked cars.

SIDEWALK

Temi flings a grocery bag in tune with his jolly walk.

He waves at the neighbourhood kids, mostly white, playing near the church across the street.

They recognise him and wave back.

He moves along.

Eventually he reaches a tall Zebra-coloured building and enters.

INT. APARTMENT COMPLEX - NIGHT

STAIRCASE, GROUND FLOOR

Temi empties the mailbox, sorts the letters on his way up.

STAIRCASE, SECOND FLOOR

He dumps the grocery bag and all the letters, apart from one, by the door on the right.

Then he knocks on the door on the left.

An old white lady, WHITE MRS BLUNT, opens.

He trembles a bit as he gives her the letter.

She rips it from his hand with unnecessary force.

WHITE MRS BLUNT
Thief.

BLACK TEMI
We've been over this Mrs Blunt.

WHITE MRS BLUNT
I don't trust you.

She retreats inside.

BLACK TEMI
(whispering)
I don't trust you either lady.

TEMI'S APARTMENT

KITCHEN

He soaks a dirty dish in the sink and pours a cup of tea.

INDISTINCT TV CHATTER

The phone rings.

BLACK TEMI
There you are... What happened last night... Sure... Of course... Don't worry about it, pay me back whenever... All right mate, see you tomorrow.

He hangs up and goes to befriend his couch in the

LIVING ROOM

He leans back, puts his feet on the table and pulls out the manuscript.

He studies the blank pages closely, running his finger across.

Suddenly he picks up his phone and makes a call.

BLACK TEMI
Mother dearling. It is I, your loving son.

MUM'S VOICE
Oh shut up.

Temi bursts out laughing.

BLACK TEMI

Listen, I'll come visit Saturday.

LATER

Temi sleeps on the couch.

Papers scattered all around him.

DARKNESS

INT. TEMI'S APARTMENT - DAY

TEMI'S POV

He opens his eyes, staring at the ceiling.

Then he looks at his stained shirt.

He gets up and walks to the

BATHROOM

He turns the lights on and approaches the sink.

A white hand turns on the water.

WHITE TEMI (OS)

What the hell?

He looks in the mirror, sees WHITE TEMI: same age and body type, but a completely different face and race.

END TEMI'S POV

He panics.

WHITE TEMI

No-no-no-no.

His Nigerian accent is still there.

He jumps back into the

LIVING ROOM

and changes his shirt in a hurry.

STAIRCASE

An old black lady, BLACK MRS BLUNT, walks out of her apartment with a letter in her hand.

LIVING ROOM

White Temi puts his coat on.

KNOCK ON DOOR

He opens.

Black Mrs Blunt clearly knows him but he doesn't recognise her appearance.

BLACK MRS BLUNT

Do not stuff my box with your mail.
(she hands it to him) I'm not paying
your bills.

He looks baffled, clutching the letter to his chest.

WHITE TEMI

Mrs Blunt?

She ignores him and returns to her apartment.

EXT/INT. BLACK&WHITE PUBLISHING - DAY

Sign above the entrance reads:

"BLACK&WHITE PUBLISHING"

INSIDE

Temi walks in to the office and finds a

CUBICLE

He pulls out the manuscript and goes through the blank pages.

A black lady, BLACK BOSS (50s), walks up to him.

She gives him a stern look.

BLACK BOSS

Very funny!

WHITE TEMI

Pardon?

She points at the executive offices.

BLACK BOSS

Go to your office.

He looks at her intently.

She lowers her chin and raises her eyebrows.

WHITE TEMI

Boss?

BOSS

Morning Temi.

He gets on his feet and nears her.

Without consideration he begins fondling her face and hair.

BLACK BOSS (CONT'D)

(assertively)

Do you mind?

He withdraws his hands.

WHITE TEMI

You're black.

The boss, no less confused, looks around and locks eyes with a skinny white man in the next cubicle, SIMON (20s).

SIMON

(to boss)

He's not wrong. (to Temi)

Timing's a bit off though.

Temi notices Simon.

WHITE TEMI

Simon?

BLACK BOSS

What's the matter with you today?

Temi remains clueless and embarrassed.

BLACK BOSS (CONT'D)
Take a few days off please, do some
work at home yeah.

INT. PUB - NIGHT

BOOTH

A few empty glasses on the table.

Temi finishes another pint. He's in a bad mood.

Simon seems more content. There's still beer in his glass.

SIMON

Are you a half-glass-full or empty
sort of person?

WHITE TEMI

What do you think?

SIMON

Me?

WHITE TEMI

Why not? We know each other, right?

SIMON

Sure.

WHITE TEMI

Go on then. Tell me about me.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Temi gawks at the WHITE GP during the consultation.

On the wall behind the doctor hangs a diploma.

WHITE GP

I can assure you the booster has no
affect on your complexion.

WHITE TEMI

So what do I do?

WHITE GP

I'm not sure.

Temi takes another hard look.

WHITE TEMI
Are you really a doctor?

The GP points at the diploma.

Temi remains unconvinced.

WHITE GP
There may be a treatment--

WHITE TEMI
(excited)
Yeah?

WHITE GP
But I'll have to consult with my
colleagues.

Temi nods with slight disappointment.

WHITE GP (CONT'D)
May I ask...why would you want to
be black? Why not take advantage?

Temi ponders the question intently.

WHITE GP (CONT'D)
Look at the bright side.

INT. TRAIN - DAY

Temi finds a seat in a crowded but quiet car.

TRAIN MOVES

Some passengers are on their phones.

Others read the free papers.

No one ogles him.

He stamps his feet, claps his hands and tops it with a few squawks.

Still no one reacts.

The white lady to his left has brought her own broadsheet news.

Temi sneaks an obvious peak.

She smiles and angles the paper to make it easier for him to read.

TRAIN STOPS

The white man to his right gets up and exits.

Two black women enter, looking for vacant seats.

Temi gives up his and invites them to sit.

They look at him oddly before accepting his offer.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

Temi and Simon are the only white people in the full house.

The MINISTER gives an

INAUDIBLE SPEECH

OCCASIONAL CHEERS

Temi's more interested in Simon, who hangs on every word of the sermon.

The churchgoers focus on the book in their hands. No one looks at Temi or Simon.

Simon removes his jacket, getting comfortable.

MINISTER

...and that's why Jesus was black.
It cannot be denied, and so what.

Temi throws his brow.

SPEECH CONTINUES INAUDIBLY

Simon notices Temi's unease.

SIMON

All right, mate?

Temi faces him with accusing eyes.

WHITE TEMI
Why did you bring me here?

Simon is clearly baffled.

SIMON
What do you mean?

EXT. STREET - DAY

SIDEWALK

Temi and Simon walk and talk.

Simon makes him smile.

WHITE TEMI
So what did you do the other
night?

Simon has a playful glint in his eyes.

SIMON
You'll see.

They turn right, disappearing from sight.

EXT. BLOOMSBURY SQUARE - DAY

CHARLES JAMES FOX STATUE

Simon speaks to a mixed crowd.

SIMON
He was a liberal hero. No doubt a
champion of abolitionism,
nonetheless brought down by his
sculptor, who did slave-owners as
well.

The enlightened crowd pays close attention.

Gradually they get crossed.

Simon gives them a short glance.

Then he raises his heavy mallet.

The crowd lift up their hammers and chisels.

They charge the statue.

From out of nowhere, Temi jumps in and stops them in their track, Simon included.

Temi wears a bucket hat and a turtleneck, attempting to hide his identity.

SIMON
(to Temi)
What are you doing?

Temi steals a little hammer and chisel from one of the protesters.

Armed and ready he approaches the statue.

The bewildered crowd observes as Temi removes the kneeling slave beneath Fox, and nothing else.

Temi then faces the crowd

WHITE TEMI
The proud white man sucks himself off to the image of the kneeling slave, who begs him for help instead of fighting for his own release.

Find them, erase them, but leave the rest unspoiled.

SIMON
Are you kidding me?

He returns the tools to the protester and walks out on the happening.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

CHIEF'S OFFICE

A well kept white man, CHIEF (50s), sits behind the desk.

He opens his lunchbox to find a pink letter resting on top of the lump of aluminium foil.

He cuts it open with a pen:

"HAVE A GOOD LUNCH DEAR."

A young black man, SERGEANT (20s), rushes in.

SERGEANT

The progress of civilization has
been vandalised.

CHIEF

How bad is it?

SERGEANT

They carved the black man out of
existence.

CHIEF

Again? What's going on?

The sergeant shrugs his shoulder.

CHIEF (CONT'D)

Right, send a unit to guard the
Reid-Statue, day and night.

SERGEANT

Right away Sir.

CHIEF

Very good Sergeant! Do you want a
carrot?

SERGEANT

Don't need it. Thank you Sir.

The sergeant bolts out of the room.

The chief unwraps his lunch.

EXT/INT. COMEDY CLUB - NIGHT

OUTSIDE CLUB ENTRANCE

Sharply dressed in black, Temi lights a cigarette. He coughs more than he smokes.

SIMON (OS)

Smoking now, are we?

Simon has fancied up as well, ogling Temi's bad habit.

Temi dumps the rest of it in the ashtray.

WHITE TEMI

Screw it.

SIMON

Ready for a time-out?

Temi nods without convincing Simon.

Then they enter the club.

INSIDE

A male BLACK COMEDIAN takes centre stage.

He is sandwiched in between COMMENTATOR #1 and #2.

The commentators sit on small stools, wearing Ofcom ID-tags around their necks.

They too have a microphone.

The predominantly white audience applaud the comedian's arrival.

BLACK COMEDIAN

Evening folks. My name is
Whereareyoufrom Originally.

LOUD LAUGHING

As the laughter fades out commentator #1 interrupts the last remaining giggles.

COMMENTATOR #1

The entertainer assumes that some of you have unwittingly asked that question in the past.

COMMENTATOR #2

(to #1)

They're laughing, so he may be right.

COMMENTATOR #1

Perhaps. You never know do you?

COMMENTATOR #2

You never know.

COMMENTATOR #1

Never know.

The Comedian breaks in.

BLACK COMEDIAN

So, a Scott, an Irish man and a fella from Wales walks out of a pub. They're gone.

He shoos them away, waving his hands.

BLACK COMEDIAN (CONT'D)

I want you to ignore them completely as this joke is about the English.

LAUGHING

COMMENTATOR #1

Playing around with the people-going-into-bars formula.

COMMENTATOR #2

Crafty.

BLACK COMEDIAN

Three Englishmen appear in a joke, but leave before the work is done, and so a Polish immigrant takes the job.

NERVOUS LAUGHING

COMMENTATOR #1

An observation steeped in Anti-Brexitness.

COMMENTATOR #2

I think, in the end, it's going to sit well with the audience.

COMMENTATOR #1

Absolutely. He's already penetrated the defence with a wonderful intro. If he keeps his balance it's a walk-in from here.

BLACK COMEDIAN

I've always wondered why men were the main consumers of pornography--

COMMENTATOR #1

Ooh, heading out of bounds--

COMMENTATOR #2

Yeah, he needs to cut back--

BLACK COMEDIAN

Until I realised women are hornier
than men.

CROWD BOOS

BLACK COMEDIAN (CONT'D)

Raunchy beyond repair.

LOUDER BOOS

BLACK COMEDIAN (CONT'D)

Women use porn to get on with it.

EVEN LOUDER

The comedian finally walks off stage.

CROWD CHEERING

COMMENTATOR #1

Tough break.

COMMENTATOR #2

But that's the beauty of the game--

COMMENTATOR #1

That's what it's all about.

INT. TV STUDIO - NIGHT

A NEWSWOMAN interviews a white lady, MIRANDA (40s), who wears her hair in a tightly gathered high bun.

NEWSWOMAN

Mirandaaa...?

MIRANDA

Just Miranda.

The newswoman pauses for a second.

NEWSWOMAN

Very well. As Head of the board,
you must have an opinion on this
book.

MIRANDA

First off, we're still deciding
whether or not to use it in class--

NEWSWOMAN

You wanted high-quality textbooks.
Is this one fit for purpose?

MIRANDA

No! I will not be arguing on its
behalf. Some of my colleagues might.
Opinions vary, as you well know.

NEWSWOMAN

Like the opinion of those at
Black&White Publishing?

MIRANDA

Yes, we've got an upcoming meeting
with one of their representatives.

She'll try to convince us that
caricatures, depicting black people
in unflattering ways, are somehow
suitable for children.

NEWSWOMAN

You mean teenagers.

MIRANDA

No, I mean children.

INT. TEMI'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

LIVING ROOM

The TV is turned off.

Temi sleeps on the couch.

RING RING

He stays blind as he fumbles for the phone.

WHITE TEMI

Mum? ... Sorry, I meant to call...
That's not a good idea... I don't
feel well... What? ... Oh you saw
it... I fell asleep... Don't worry...
That's completely irrelevant.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

CHIEF'S OFFICE

The Chief and the sergeant watch

CCTV OF TEMI VANDALISING THE STATUE OF CHARLES FOX

They put on headphones as

TEMI BEGINS HIS SPEECH

CHIEF

(almost shouting)

Give him his fifteen minutes of
fame.

The sergeant pauses the video and takes a screenshot of Temi.

INT. TEMI'S OFFICE - DAY

Temi studies a blank screen.

The boss walks in.

She's annoyed about something.

He's too preoccupied to notice her.

BLACK BOSS

Temi...

Still no reaction.

BLACK BOSS (CONT'D)

I'm taking you off this thing.

He finally turns to face her.

WHITE TEMI

You can't do that.

BLACK BOSS

It's done.

WHITE TEMI

It's my book, my presentation. You
said so yourself.

BLACK BOSS

I don't remember saying that.
Regardless, it's best that I do it.

WHITE TEMI

What about me?

BLACK BOSS

Get your act together. And get
started on the gardening book.

She slams the door behind her.

EXT. STREET - DAY

SIDE WALK

Temi passes by the

CHURCH, FRONT

when he hears a cry of pain.

VOICE (OS)

Damn it.

He follows the sound to the

CHURCH, BACK GARDEN

and stops in mild shock.

A nun with a basket picks dildos off a Dildo-tree.

Beside it grows a walnut tree.

Temi zooms in on the nun.

One of her fingers is wrapped in a bloody bandage.

He runs back to the

CHURCH, FRONT

where he stumbles into a ten year old black boy from
the 18th century.

The boy is wearing a deep sky blue coloured waistcoat,
fully buttoned, and a white shirt, loose around the
arms with red stripes underneath.

The look is finished off with tight light-brown trousers.

The boy uses both hands to carry a basket full of grapes, plums and a big melon.

Temi looks hungry.

The boy offers him a plum, as more, similarly dressed, black children appear.

Temi shakes his head, suspicious of the quality.

The kids recognise him and wave.

Temi doesn't know them at all.

He starts to back off in fear.

They follow him.

He's going slightly mad.

FAST-PACED FOOTSTEPS FROM BEHIND

His jog turns into a frantic sprint.

BOY'S VOICE (OS)

Wait up.

Temi looses control of his breath and mind.

OTHER BOY'S VOICE (OS)

Oi, Temi.

Temi slows down, too abruptly, making him faint.

The kids run up to him.

One of them shakes his body, hoping he'll wake up.

Another one slaps his face gently.

He looks like he's been sleeping for hours.

DARKNESS

TEMI'S DREAM

INT. SMALL 18th CENTURY CHAMBER ROOM - NIGHT

Thick drapes in the background partly covers a blank painting.

A white lady, dressed as an 18th century maid, sits at a small round table decked with a nearly-empty carafe, two empty glasses and a lit candle.

Sitting next to her, a uniformed slave boy, in a Tricorne hat, wraps his arms around her.

Away from the table, another liveried servant sits with his back turned to them.

Slowly, he turns in his chair, facing them with a bugle-horn in his hand.

ANNOYING BUGLE-HORN SOUND

On the floor lays an open book, both pages blank.

END TEMI'S DREAM

INT. TEMI'S APARTMENT - DAY

BUGLE-HORN SOUND CONTINUES

BEDROOM

Temi rolls around in his sleep.

BUGLE-HORN SOUND STOPS

Swiftly he wakes up, puffed and sweaty, surprised to be in his bed.

KNOCK ON ENTRANCE DOOR

Temi quickly collects himself.

He puts on a robe and walks to the

ENTRANCE

He opens the main door.

Simon jumps in with a newspaper in his hand.

He's excited and jittery.

WHITE TEMI
Tea or coffee?

Simon runs to the couch in the living room and spreads out the newspaper.

Temi heads for the

KITCHEN

He puts the kettle on.

LIVING ROOM

Simon flicks through the paper.

KITCHEN

Temi pours two cups of tea, brings them to the

LIVING ROOM

and joins Simon on the couch.

SIMON
You made the news mate.

He shows Temi a low-quality picture of him giving the speech at Bloomsbury Square, next to the statue he'd just vandalised.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

CHIEF'S OFFICE

Big bowl of fruit on the desk.

The chief chews on a banana.

The sergeant walks in.

CHIEF
Anything?

SERGEANT
Not yet.

He seems eager to leave.

CHIEF

Sit down. Stay a while.

The sergeant sits.

CHIEF

Try the apples.

The sergeant grabs one but keeps it in his hand.

SERGEANT

I should get going.

CHIEF

Why the rush?

The sergeant doesn't answer; instead he leans back and bites into the apple.

CHIEF (CONT'D)

Hey, we're just two colleagues having lunch.

SERGEANT

I've got other colleagues.

CHIEF

So?

SERGEANT

You know what it's like out there.
Not everyone approves.

EXT. STREET - DAY

SIDEWALK

Temi and Simon close in on the church, turning right just before the entrance.

Temi points Simon in the direction of the

CHURCH, BACK GARDEN

Temi freezes up once more.

The Dildo-tree has been replaced with a black man, who sells cucumbers next to the walnut tree.

The cucumbers stick out of a container strapped to his lower waist.

Miranda rummages through the phallus-shaped edibles.

Her hands are uncomfortably close to his genitals, not that she minds.

Eventually she finds a few winners and pays the man.

Temi doesn't trust his eyes.

SIMON (OS)

You want some?

Temi turns around and walks away.

WHITE TEMI

Let's get out of here.

EXT. STREET - DAY

SIDEWALK, BANK ENTRANCE

Simon leaves Temi outside as he enters the bank.

Temi looks at the facade.

A nearly hidden security camera films the sidewalk.

His mind wanders.

Simon joins him outside, wallet in hand.

They move along the

SIDEWALK

Simon pockets the wallet.

Soon after they pass the local petrol station.

An expensive car is parked near the petrol pump.

Simon squints: The car's empty and the door is open.

He looks at Temi.

Temi shakes his head.

SIMON

Come on. If he left the door open
the keys are bound to be inside.

WHITE TEMI

No!

SIMON

It's not stealing.

WHITE TEMI

No?

SIMON

Not if we return it in time.

Temi gives in.

Simon looks very pleased.

They rush into the car and speed off.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

WINDY

Crowded with people of all ages.

The LIFEGUARD keeps watch from his tower, with a pair of binoculars hanging from his neck.

Temi and Simon plunge into the water, racing away from the shore.

A quarter of a mile out Simon turns round and heads back.

Temi lingers for a while, noticing something in the distance.

Suddenly he swims back as fast as he can.

Back on shore he runs past Simon and climbs up to the lifeguard.

He points at the sea.

WHITE TEMI

Look out there.

The lifeguard finds nothing worth noting.

WHITE TEMI

There. (impatient) Give me those.

Temi takes the binoculars and scouts the sea.

Nothing... Nothing... There it is.

A black man is chained to a log while fighting the waves on the rise.

Temi panics and squeaks.

WHITE TEMI

Have you got a boat?

LIFEGUARD

A what?

WHITE TEMI

Forget it.

He jumps down and runs to Simon with instructions.

Then he returns to the water.

Simon stays on shore, making a telephone call.

Temi crawls fast enough to escape sharks.

Eventually he pauses for a breath.

He looks for the man on the log...

There he is, still alive and fighting.

Temi adjusts his racing line.

A few deep breaths and he's off again.

On shore, two policewomen turn up with a surfboat.

Quickly it catches up with Temi.

They bring him on board.

The officers can't see anything with their binoculars.

One of them lets Temi have a go.

Empty sea... Empty sea... Empty sea.

Temi makes a few frantic adjustments and tries again.

Empty sea... Empty sea... Empty sea.

He sighs heavily.

The boat turns around.

WHITE TEMI

(to the officers)

I'm so sorry. I must've imagined it.

The waves grow even taller as the wind picks up.

INT. TEMI'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

BEDROOM

Temi swings the right arm, violently, in his sleep.

TEMI'S DREAM

EXT. GREEN FIELD DURING HARVEST, 18th CENTURY - DAY

Black Temi wears a long red coat, short yellow trousers, long white socks and black shoes.

Armed with a stick, he beats a kneeling white slave dressed in a green-coloured sumo-wrestler outfit.

Behind them, similarly dressed white slaves carry, pull and push the heavy loads of the harvest.

Next to the white slaves in the background, noble black people dine and dance in variously bright-coloured coats, resembling Black Temi's attire.

Black Temi keeps swinging.

The kneeling white man lifts his fists to his chin and begs for mercy.

END TEMI'S DREAM

INT. TEMI'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

BEDROOM

He wakes up and turns the light on.

Then he checks his skin colour...

White.

Disappointed, he welcomes the darkness ones more and goes back to a more peaceful sleep.

QUIET MUSIC

INT. BRISTOL CITY CENTER - DAY

JEN REID'S STATUE

QUIET MUSIC CONTINUES

SUNNY

Two white officers observe the statue from the car.

They become suspicious of someone.

A black civilian walks up to the statue with a vanilla ice cream cone in his hand.

It begins to melt.

MUSIC TURNS OMINOUS

A few drops land on the pavement.

He lifts the cone to his mouth and--

SLAM

The two officers tackle him to the ground.

FLYING ICE CREAM ASCENDING

The civilian looks at them accusingly.

FLYING ICE CREAM DESCENDING

One of the officers points to a sign:

"NO FOOD AND DRINK ALLOWED NEAR STATUE"

FLYING ICE CREAM LANDS ON THE TOP OF THE STATUE

The civilian remains annoyed as he gets on his feet.

The other officer writes him a ticket and sends him on his way.

The ice drips down the statue.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

CHIEF'S OFFICE

The chief and the sergeant sit across from one another.

The chief shakes his head.

CHIEF

Idiots. Run them through the course again.

The sergeant nods.

SERGEANT

I'll make sure they pass.

The chief takes a close look at the sergeant.

CHIEF

What about you? How are you doing?

SERGEANT

(cautious)

Fine. Why?

CHIEF

Dating anyone?

The sergeant twists in his chair.

SERGEANT

No! I'm working.

CHIEF

Most of your superiors are married.
You know that right?

SERGEANT
We'll see.

The sergeant walks out of the office.

The chief doesn't seem all that bothered.

CHIEF
(whispering)
Loosen up kiddo.

He grabs a Brussels sprout and flings it in his mouth.

EXT/INT. COMEDY CLUB - NIGHT

SIDEWALK, ENTRANCE

Simon hands Temi a suspicious looking cigarette.

Temi grabs his lighter.

SIMON
Those to horse'll have to mount.
Those who cough should make it count.

Temi lights up.

Simon smiles approvingly.

INSIDE

Full house. Mixed crowd.

STAGE

The two white Ofcom-commentators sit on their little stools.

Looking closer they seem tired, too tired to interrupt the act, for now.

A well-dressed WHITE COMEDIAN (late 40s), with a posh voice, continues his routine.

WHITE COMEDIAN
My girl and I decided to spice up our sex lives: We went for sodomy in Russia.

HETEROSEXUAL LAUGHTER--

WHITE COMEDIAN

She moaned the most when the cops
took her for a man.

CIS LAUGHTER

WHITE COMEDIAN

'She could still be a man,' they
said, after she flashed her
genitals.

TERF LAUGHTER--

WHITE COMEDIAN

Long story short, I refuse to date
a prisoner.

WARDEN LAUGHTER

WHITE COMEDIAN

The Nazis are no longer in power,
to the detriment of my own personal
life.

Commentator #1 goes on alert

INNOCENT LAUGHTER--

WHITE COMEDIAN

Now, whenever I 'punch up' I miss
the little buggers.

ARMY OFFICER LAUGHTER

Commentator #1 gets on his feet.

COMMENTATOR #1

Whenever you think about Hitler the
Holocaust pops up. They are
indissolubly linked.

You can't mock the Master Race
without reminding us of its trash.

That's why this law doesn't just
apply to non-minority white
comedians. Now listen...

Minorities in Britain won't relax
until the white man stops joking
about Nazis.

The commentator sits back down.

He signals for the white comedian to continue.

WHITE COMEDIAN

Right... Let's see if we can't get around it...

The audience gets excited.

The commentators stay on alert.

WHITE COMEDIAN

People don't know this, because it's not taught in our schools, but during the Holocaust the Nazis murdered five million non-minority whites in POW camps.

No one ever wants to talk about that, because no one ever wants to talk about the negatives.

INCORRIGIBLE LAUGHTER

The commentators scramble to find a ruling in their notes.

WHITE COMEDIAN

Apologies, I shouldn't make fun. Words are - and even the MPs agree on this - words are the same as real world actions...

CROWD APPLAUDS

WHITE COMEDIAN

Get Brexit Done.

REMOANER LAUGHTER

WHITE COMEDIAN

Oh you like that. Well strap in then... There's a lot of talk about Ukraine these days, but no one cares about the wars in other countries.

CHEERS

WHITE COMEDIAN
They never get a mention.

CHEERS AND APPLAUSE

WHITE COMEDIAN
(stressing each word)
All lives matter.

BRIEF SILENCE

The crowd adjusts.

LOUD SELF-DEPRECATING LAUGHTER

FESTIVE MUSIC

INT. TEMI'S OFFICE - DAY

MUSIC CONTINUES

Temi explains his current project to Simon.

MUSIC FADES OUT

SIMON
Wow, they kill their neighbours?

WHITE TEMI
Absolutely. They choke them, cut
their limbs. They stop them from
growing limbs. You name it.

SIMON
(defiant)
I'm having steak tonight.

The boss walks in.

BLACK BOSS
How goes Temi?

WHITE TEMI
Hey boss, I nearly finished the
chapter on Alleopathy.

BLACK BOSS
Are you all right?

He nods to confirm.

WHITE TEMI
I'll survive.

She smiles.

Simon follows her out of the office.

Temi cracks on.

EXT. PARK - DAY

A WHITE MAN, dressed as a Sikh, wears a pair of square glasses and a turban with an orange resting on top.

The orange is tagged with the words:

"PR-STUNT"

His left hand holds up a generic stick-man sketch, black on white paper.

The sergeant shows up.

The white man bows gently.

The orange throws off the sergeant, briefly.

SERGEANT
Hello Sir.

The white man nods.

SERGEANT (CONT'D)
Your wife wants you home.

The white man doesn't respond.

SERGEANT (CONT'D)
Would you like to see her?

WHITE MAN
I can't.

SERGEANT
Why is that?

WHITE MAN
There's someone else--

SERGEANT
An affair?--

WHITE MAN
In the mirror! I don't know him or
the stranger he's married to.

SERGEANT
That's just the way we feel
sometimes--

WHITE MAN
These are not feelings, but facts.

Fact: I wanted to write a children's
book. Fact: It needed pictures. Fact:
I'm an arse according to the public,
and in the eyes of my wife.

The white man sobs.

SERGEANT
Are you sure you don't want a ride?

The white man shakes his head.

SERGEANT (CONT'D)
It'll start raining soon.

WHITE MAN
Where would you take me?

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

HALL

The sergeant hums a melody on his way to

RECEPTION

The RECEPTIONIST takes notice and hums along.

After a bit of trial and error they finally harmonise.

HUMMING ENDS

The receptionist smiles at the sergeant.

He turns shy.

She takes the initiative instead, writing her number down on a piece of paper.

As she hands it to him their fingers touch.

He softens up.

INT. TEMI'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

MUTED OLD TV SHOW, ARCHIVE FOOTAGE

Richard Pryor presents CHARLIE HILL, a Native American, and leaves the stage to him.

Temi unmutes the TV.

Charlie gives the audience a quick look and starts chanting.

CHARLIE HILL
HI-HOW-ARE-YOU. HI-HOW-ARE-YOU.
HI-HOW-ARE-YOU. HI-HOW-ARE-YOU.

The crowd bursts out laughing.

Temi cracks up as well.

CHARLIE HILL
I usually have problems doing my act, you know, 'cause I know a lot of you white people have never seen an Indian do stand-up comedy before.

For so long you probably thought that Indians never had a sense of humour, you know...

We never thought you were too funny either.

CROWD LAUGHS

Temi checks his calendar.

He grabs his phone and sets the alarm.

Then he gets comfortable.

Soon after he drifts off.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Temi leans forward in his chair, eager for an answer.

The GP folds his hands carefully.

WHITE GP

We found a cure, (Temi smiles)
however it's unethical to initiate
such a treatment, for both of us.

Temi falls apart inside.

WHITE GP (CONT'D)

I'm sorry.

The GP seems genuinely concerned.

Then he checks his watch.

Temi collects himself and walks out.

DOOR SLAMS

The GP grabs his phone and begins texting.

INT. TEMI'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

INDISTINCT RADIO NOISE

KITCHEN

Temi digs in to his carefully prepared Asun; smoked goat with spicy Ata Rodo peppers and onions.

It's too strong for him.

His face turns red.

He grabs a glass of milk to sooth the pain.

Then he bends over, waiting to feel better.

RADIO-VOICE

We're too negative. Think of what we've accomplished just in the last few decades.

Temi gets curious.

RADIO-VOICE (CONT'D)

Men can be turned into women with
simple, superficial procedures.
Women--

CONTINUES INDISTINCTLY

Temi straightens his back with a determined look on his face.

He marches to the

BATHROOM

VENTILATOR NOISE

He stares at a box of black shoe polish.

Then he looks at himself in the mirror.

Eventually he picks it up and unscrews the lid.

Hesitant fingers hover above the black polish.

LOUDER VENTILATOR NOISE

He starts crying, silently, with a face full of anguish.

In the end he throws the polish against the wall.

It remains intact, resting on the floor.

DARKNESS

INT. BLACK&WHITE PUBLISHING - DAY

TEMI'S POV

He enters the office unnoticed.

The boss is at the other end, talking to Simon.

Temi steps closer.

The cubicles are filled with busy workers, mostly white.

Halfway there, Temi calls out.

WHITE TEMI (OS)
(too low)
Boss... I want to do the presentation.

No reaction.

A few feet away from them he tries again.

WHITE TEMI (OS) (CONT'D)
BOSS.

She turns and is immediately disturbed by what she's looking at.

The shock doesn't hit Simon.

He moves forward, slowly, more curious than anything else.

The boss screams a war cry and charges in.

She swings her fists with uncontrolled fury, mostly hitting his chest.

HEAVY PUNCHING SOUNDS

Temi ends up on the floor.

The boss keeps punching.

Two workers come to the rescue.

They drag the protesting boss out of the office like experienced bouncers.

Temi looks at the ceiling.

Simon walks in to his line of sight and bends down to check on him.

Simon's caring eyes move closer and closer.

SIMON
How do you feel?

Temi gets up and wobbles to his

EXECUTIVE OFFICE

In the chair, he looks up.

The black sergeant stands before him and begins taking a statement.

He's not interested in whatever's on Temi's face.

The sergeant pulls out his pad and pen.

SERGEANT

Timmy?

WHITE TEMI (OS)

Temi.

The sergeant notices Temi's Nigerian accent.

SERGEANT

Temi?

WHITE TEMI (OS)

Yes.

SERGEANT

(sceptical)

Your name is Temi?

WHITE TEMI (OS)

That's right.

The sergeant is far from persuaded.

SERGEANT

Could I see some ID please?

END TEMI'S POV

INT. TEMI'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

KITCHEN

SOUND OF RUNNING WATER FROM THE BATHROOM

A hot oven warms up a plate of leftovers.

White and unpolished Temi walks out of the bathroom.

He seems unmoved by the recent event.

Turning off the oven he retrieves his dinner.

Then he looks for something in the cupboard.

No luck.

Temi covers the plate of food with another plate.

Then he grabs a jacket and takes a final look around.

He disappears from the kitchen.

DOOR SLAMS

The top plate slips off slightly.

The steam from the dish goes flying.

INT. SUPERMARKET - NIGHT

SPICE AISLE

Temi grabs a salt sprinkler and rushes to the

CHECKOUT

In front of him, a black man waits in line.

First in line, a white man puts his shopping on the conveyor belt.

BIP

Temi can't see the checkout assistant, but it sounds like a fast worker.

The black man steps away from his shopping cart, heading for the newspapers.

BIP

Despite the pace Temi gets impatient.

The white man pays up.

The black man returns with a paper in his hand.

He's just about to empty his cart when--

Temi jumps the cue and throws the salt on the conveyer belt.

The black man complains to himself.

Temi recognises the white checkout girl with the purple hair.

She seems to know Temi but ignores him.

Instead she asks the black man a silent question.

In response the black man shakes his head.

Temi tries to cover up a provocative smile, celebrating his tiny victory.

The checkout girl ploughs on.

BIP

Temi pays up and heads for the exit.

They watch as he leaves.

The usual security guard stands by the door.

Temi shifts his balance with a powerful pad on the shoulder.

The security guard smiles.

EXT. STREET - DAY

SIDEWALK

As he takes the usual route home, Temi keeps looking up.

Miranda passes him.

She becomes curious and looks up as well, briefly.

As he walks by the

LOCAL BANK

Temi stops to look at the security camera.

It films him as well as the sidewalk.

The weather is getting cloudy.

EXT. ANOTHER STREET - DAY

SIDEWALK

The sergeant and the receptionist walk arm in arm.

The street is filled with expressions of woo.

Near a shop window, a butterfly masturbates to its own reflection.

SOUND OF SCREAMING CATS

Two cats are roleplaying tough love.

A bird couple kiss on top of a wooden birdhouse.

A sling shooting ten-year-old ruffles their feathers.

THUMP

The receptionist guides the sergeant towards her residence.

JOLLY HARP PLAYS

INT. RECEPTIONIST'S HOUSE - DAY

JOLLY HARP CONTINUES

LIVING ROOM

They sit on upright chairs, separated by a round table. The receptionist plays the harp like a champ.

The sergeant sings along.

In a bowl on the shelf, two goldfish lust for one another.

Next to them two roses hug.

The receptionist and the sergeant lean towards each other, without boycotting the music.

They're about to kiss--

SLAM

A book lands on the table in between them.

The cover says:

"COVID"

The shock puts a damper on the courtship.

The sergeant gets on his feet.

The receptionist looks up to him, pleading eyes.

SERGEANT

I'm really sorry.

He backs off.

She looks disappointed but keeps playing.

DOOR OPENS AND CLOSES

The tune changes to a sad piece.

She plays it gently at first.

Gradually it gets aggressive.

She wears her face like a fighter in the ring.

MUSIC STOPS ABRUPTLY

INT. TEMI'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

BEDROOM

Temi sleeps in the foetal position.

There are bunny-lines on his nose.

TEMI'S DREAM

EXT. SIDEWALK OUTSIDE 18th CENTURY RESIDENCE - DAY

Black Temi kneels by his basket of rabbits.

A small white dog walks up to him.

He pads it gently.

The dog's owner approaches; a white lady balancing a basket on her head.

She nods as she passes by.

He looks up to her.

Black Temi knocks on the main door.

A lady answers.

She bends down to grab a rabbit and gives it a full inspection.

A man shows up behind her, immediately affected by the smell, holding his nose.

He smiles though, not that bothered.

Black Temi holds up a few other dead rabbits, hoping these might suffice.

The lady throws 'her' rabbit back in the basket and shuts the door.

END TEMI'S DREAM

INT. BLACK&WHITE PUBLISHING - DAY

Temi enters.

The workers have gathered to cheer him on.

He moves past them like a cyclist at the Tour de France.

WORKER #1 (OS)

Go on boss.

WORKER #2 (OS)

Get in.

He sees Simon clapping along.

SIMON

Take a look at your new office.

Temi heads for the

BOSS OFFICE

He tries to get comfortable in his new chair.

Simon walks in with two cups of tea.

He places one on Temi's desk.

SIMON

You didn't press charges?

WHITE TEMI

No.

SIMON

Why not?

Temi looks at the blank screen of the laptop.

WHITE TEMI

I need to get some work done. Can we chat later?

SIMON

Sure mate. But don't eat any sugar.

Temi nods to confirm.

Simon leaves.

Temi writes down notes on a piece of paper, with a pen that doesn't work, although he still doesn't notice.

The paper remains white through the ordeal, same as all the other ones.

The fumes of the tea makes Temi go for a sip.

He puts the cup down.

Then he continues the work.

INT. CHOCOLATE FACTORY - DAY

BY THE OVEN

Cacao beans are roasting.

Loads of mouths water.

Temi, Simon and the rest follow the TOUR GUIDE to the

WINNOWER MACHINE

It breaks the bean and segregates it from the nib.

TOUR GUIDE

Remember beans are bad; nibs are
neat, unless you want white
chocolate.

They move to a

LARGE WET-STONE GRINDER

It stirs the liquefied chocolate.

Simon drops his jaw.

Temi notices something in the distance.

He escapes the pack and moves to the

BUFFET AREA

Before him, a large table filled with various treats.

In the middle, a large fountain squirting out
chocolate.

Unable to contain himself he sticks his finger out,
slowly reaching for it... reaching...

Suddenly Simon grabs his arm, preventing him from
loosing etiquette.

SIMON

Let's get out of here.

Temi sighs.

EXT. HURTWOOD - DAY

Miranda moves through the heath.

Eventually she makes it to the forest.

She comes across a lonely caravan painted green.

KEYS JINGLE

Miranda unlocks the door and disappears inside.

The morning sun escapes the clouds.

Suddenly a dozen ten-year-olds appear in the distance,
all heading for the caravan.

They look more adult than most kids that age.

One carries a slingshot.

A few feet from the caravan, the children pull out
knives.

Miranda walks out of the caravan with a big stack of
books.

The children sharpen their pencils and take a seat on
the ground.

Miranda hands out the books.

The class begins.

SPEEDY GRT MUSIC

Miranda uses the side of the caravan as a blackboard,
drawing on it as she lectures them.

A girl raises her hands, and provides an answer.

The boy next to her laughs, briefly.

Miranda smiles and gives the girl the thumbs up.

The girl looks mighty pleased.

The laughing boy turns sour.

Miranda comes to the rescue.

She grabs the pouting boy's attention, asking him a
question.

He struggles for a bit.

Miranda looks on, encouraging him, with confidence in
his ability.

The boy lights up.

Then he raises his hand.

MUSIC STOPS ABRUPTLY

INT. TEMI'S OFFICE - DAY

Temi gives Simon a stack of blank paper.

All blank pages, but Simon sees something in them as he flicks through.

WHITE TEMI

See how they attack the appearance of various Nazis without mentioning their deeds.

Simon nods.

WHITE TEMI (CONT'D)

These juvenile caricatures became part of a book designed to showcase Hitler's sense of humour.

Temi hands Simon another stack of blank pages.

WHITE TEMI (CONT'D)

Mature pictorial Satires like these were carefully discarded. Notice the lack of body shaming, the focus on actions.

Temi points at one of the blank pages in Simon's hand. Simon zeroes in.

WHITE TEMI (CONT'D)

Look at that. Everybody's fighting each other, apart from Hitler who stays behind, laughing at the spectacle.

The man behind this drawing mocked the deeds of the Nazis so successfully, that Hitler tried to recruit him.

Simon takes his eyes off the blank pages, getting more curious.

WHITE TEMI (CONT'D)

He managed to escape to America, not before burning thousands of his drawings.

SIMON

I've never heard of him.

WHITE TEMI
No one has, apart from a few Danish
Cartoonists.

Temi flicks through a new set of blank pages.

A wind of worry reaches Simon.

SIMON
What's the point of all this?

Temi looks up but doesn't answer.

SIMON (CONT'D)
What do you get out of it?

INT. COMEDY CLUB - NIGHT

STAGE

The Ofcom-commentators prepare a service announcement.

In between them, a female UKRAINIAN COMEDIAN waits patiently.

She makes eye contact with the audience, causing a

LITTLE GUST OF GIGGLES

The commentators rise, giving the little stools a rest, as they recite.

COMMENTATOR #1
An evening urgent made a flare--

COMMENTATOR #2
It turned into a skewing fair--

COMMENTATOR #1
Minorities are safer where--

COMMENTATOR #2
Comedians are off the air.

COMMENTATOR #1
The way is t(w)o ignore it, or--

COMMENTATOR #2
Prepare the P for suction, war--

COMMENTATOR #1
A joke would just belittle lore--

COMMENTATOR #2
The laughs amass deception more.

They sit back down.

The comedian takes over, speaking with a heavy accent.

UKRAINIAN COMEDIAN
I've got one too. Are you up for it?

BRIEF CHEERING

UKRAINIAN COMEDIAN
The smelly two-faced eagle flew
A wings or two were snapped
It dragged its arse across anew
Behind a trail of crap

The smaller birds had social skills
The bird that bullied, none
They walked through death and stood to kill
He knew not where to run

CLAPPING

The comedian bows to the audience.

UKRAINIAN COMEDIAN
Any questions?

LAUGHING

The commentators are the only ones not amused.

LAUGHTER FADES OUT

A woman in the audience cuts in.

WOMAN (OS)
(to the comedian)
Why do you do it?

The commentators bring out takeaways from behind the stools, and dig in.

The comedian tries to answer the question.

UKRAINIAN COMEDIAN

Simple. I had two options: suicide or comedy. I chose the latter and climbed the mountain. To this day, I am motivated by my fear of heights.

The army of darkness arms my sarcasm. It makes me piss on Sentimentalism, for no other reason than to rob them of satisfaction.

The commentators check to see if their names came up.

UKRAINIAN COMEDIAN (CONT'D)

I will not ignore what begs to be ridiculed. I refuse to downplay the deeds of doom.

My job is to bomb them with contempt, while begging for your laughs of mass destruction....

And more often than not, the target is Toxic Positivity; a marvel as absurd as the indifference it feeds on.

Laughing at it feeds resistance.
It shows you care.

The commentators take note.

INT. TEMI'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

LIVING ROOM

On the couch, Temi and Simon share a bottle of wine.

WHITE TEMI

How did that happen?

SIMON

Beats me. I forgot my lines, as I usually do. They yelled, I started crying and they gave me the part.

WHITE TEMI

Because you cried?

Simon defends his performance and the art of acting.

SIMON

I didn't just cry. I sort of wiped
my eyes in a shivering manner.

Temi cracks a big smile.

WHITE TEMI

I have to see that.

SIMON

Piss off.

Temi tries to get serious.

WHITE TEMI

No my friend I must see.

SIMON

You are not open to my performance.
I can't just dish it out.

Temi spreads his arms wide.

WHITE TEMI

Give it to me.

SIMON

All right but remember, this is
something I really want to do.

WHITE TEMI

I know.

SIMON

I don't like books.

WHITE TEMI

(nodding)

Let's go mate. You've got this.

SIMON

You'll have to pull the trigger.

WHITE TEMI

How?

SIMON

Say something insulting.

Temi thinks it over.

WHITE TEMI

Hmm, your mum's salad has too many
cranberries.

Simon acknowledges the joke but doesn't laugh.

Instead he gives Temi a wry smile to encourage him
onwards.

WHITE TEMI (CONT'D)

Ok, you've auditioned so many times
that--

SIMON

Fuck sake. Just pick a dirty word.

WHITE TEMI

Copywriter--

Simon reacts instantly, wiping his eyes in an odd way.

WHITE TEMI

(underwhelmed and sceptical)

Did you sign a contract?

SIMON

You promised to be open--

WHITE TEMI

What are they paying you?

Simon grabs his glass and empties the wine.

Temi gets on his feet and grabs his jacket.

Simon pretends to fall asleep.

A tear falls down his cheek.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY - FLASHBACK

CHIEF'S OFFICE

Simon's face is basted in tears.

The chief pats him on the shoulder and gives him a pen.

Simon signs a piece of blank paper.

A few tears lands on the document.

The signature's invisible as well.

END FLASHBACK

INT. PUB - NIGHT

A rugged-looking RACIST ogles a well-dressed BLACK MAN who sits at the other end of the

BAR

Temi sits in between them with a beer in front of him.

RACIST

(to the black man)

Oi. Why are you staring at me?

BLACK MAN

I wasn't staring.

The racist opens his eyes wide.

RACIST

No?

BLACK MAN

I can't help but look in your direction, but I wasn't staring?

The racist doesn't trust him.

RACIST

It seemed like staring.

The black man gets anxious.

BLACK MAN

I can only apologise. I didn't mean to--

RACIST

I don't give a shit about what you meant.

The black man looks to Temi for sympathy.

WHITE TEMI

(to the black man)

He makes a fair point.

BLACK MAN
(shocked and disappointed)
Wha--

RACIST
(to the black man)
Pay attention.

WHITE TEMI
(to the black man)
If he thinks you made him paranoid
or uneasy, then you did.

The racist smiles victoriously.

The black man bursts out in fury.

BLACK MAN
You sick fucks. I didn't mean to
stare, all right. I didn't even mean
to come here.

WHITE TEMI
You can't be this ignorant.

BLACK MAN
What are you on about?

The racist laughs.

RACIST
He doesn't get it.

The black man remains perplexed.

WHITE TEMI
(to the black man)
You're intentions aren't relevant.

The racist walks by Temi, approaching the black man.

Temi grabs the drinks and moves calmly to the
BOOTH

He checks his phone. There's a missed call from
Simon.

Temi types a text message.

SOUNDS OF VIOLENCE FROM THE BAR

Temi presses send.

Then he sips his beer.

SOUND OF GLASS SHATTERING

Simon shows up, sits down.

VIOLENT SOUNDS DIE DOWN

Temi signals the waitress.

WHITE TEMI

(to Simon)

You still keeping up with
technology?

SIMON

Everyday...

WHITE TEMI

Do you know anything about
security cameras?

Simon holds back the answer, slightly suspicious.

Temi waits patiently.

Simon takes a sip of Temi's beer.

EXT/INT. LOCAL BANK - NIGHT

ENTRANCE.

A CLEANING LADY unlocks the door.

Temi and Simon grab her arms and force her
INSIDE

They tie her to a chair in

RECEPTION

Simon riffles through the drawers in
OFFICE #1

Then he checks the cabinet in

OFFICE #2

Finally he looks under the rug in

OFFICE #3

No luck. Simon returns to the

RECEPTION

The cleaning lady is more curious than terrified.

Next to her Temi notices a security camera. He follows the wire downstairs to the

SERVER ROOM

Simon joins him.

WHITE TEMI

They should be in here right?

SIMON

I think so.

They go hunting.

After a while they leave the server room, empty-handed.

RECEPTION

The cleaning lady looks at them with honest eyes.

CLEANING LADY

The recordings aren't kept locally.

Temi bows his head in disappointment.

Simon puts his hands on his hips

SIMON

Where then?

CLEANING LADY

I couldn't tell you.

WHITE TEMI

How do you know they're not here?

She hesitates.

Simon gets impatient.

SIMON

Well?

She gives in.

CLEANING LADY

The manager and I had an affair.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

SIDEWALK

Simon and Temi walk slowly and innocently.

Their faces look distressed still.

SIMON

Sorry mate.

Simon stops before making his turn.

SIMON (CONT'D)

See you tomorrow yeah. Remember to
dress up.

Temi moves on alone.

INT. AMATEUR THEATER - NIGHT

Full house. Mainly black people in the audience.

Temi and Simon sits front row.

The stage is covered in sand-coloured carpeting.

A slave ship steals the attention in the background.

Aboard it, a black slave girl hangs upside down, with a
rope around her ankle.

She's held steady by a backwards-leaning white slave-trader, who clings to the other end of the rope.

Another white slave-trader looks on, smirking.

Suddenly two young sword-wearing African Princes enter.

PRINCE #1 from the left side, PRINCE #2 from the right.

A lump of slaves in chains follows behind them both.

The slaves turn their backs on the audience.

Then they kneel beside the slave ship.

The princes face front and rip out their swords.

PRINCE #1
Off to give off certain vibes.

PRINCE #2
Off to round up neighbour tribes.

PRINCE #1
Off to look upon too bright.

PRINCE #2
Off to overlook, alight.

The princes face each other with fury.

PRINCE #1
My dad sold more slaves than yours.

CROWD GASPS

PRINCE #2
My dad sent them all offshore.

PRINCE #1
My dad outearned English Lords.

PRINCE #2
My dad earned across the board.

Prince #1 grabs a slave by the neck and raises his sword.

Prince #2 rests his blade on the necks of two slaves.

The slaves are terrified.

The slave-traders seem even more pleased.

PRINCE #1
Mighty my sword's faster too.

PRINCE #2
They might see it, neither you.

PRINCE #1
Aim to cut off from the nest.

PRINCE #2
Blame the West. - Forget the rest.

INT. CAB - NIGHT

Half-drunk and keen, Temi and Simon watch the road from the backseat.

It doesn't seem like they've left the theatre.

SIMON
So tomorrow's the day. Are you doing it?

WHITE TEMI
Definitely.

SIMON
Really?

WHITE TEMI
Wouldn't you?

SIMON
I'm not sure.

Temi looks disappointed.

SIMON (CONT'D)
Sorry mate.

WHITE TEMI
I'm doing it! I have to.

SIMON
You don't have to show them anything.

Temi gets even more upset and goes silent.

The cab driver shouts at a cyclist.

CAR HORN HONKS

INT. BOARD ROOM - DAY

The room is occupied by a handful of all-white board members, mostly women.

Miranda puts on a pair of glasses.
She's easily the most sceptical person in the room.

Temi prepares his slideshow on a PC hooked up to a large monitor.

Even though the slides are blank, he can tell the difference between them.

Most of the board members enjoy a nice chinwag.
Not Miranda. She prefers impatience.

MIRANDA

Let's get this over with. Show us
your racist black caricatures.
Please.

WHITE TEMI

Not to disappoint, but less than
half of them depicts black people.

This is a whole collection of
cartoons; some pictorial satires,
some caricatures.

Knowing the difference between
the two opens many doors.

Miranda gives him the go-ahead sign, no less impatient.

He taps the laptop.

The monitor shows the

FIRST BLANK SLIDE

GASPS OF DISGUST

WHITE TEMI (CONT'D)

The first thing to notice is her
left arm flung across his shoulder.
The white lady is obviously pleased
to have her breast fondled by the
black man.

Miranda slides her glasses down the back of her nose.

WHITE TEMI (CONT'D)

She's careful to maintain her dignity, notice how she rides him side-saddle.

The open eyes suggest distrust in each other, or vigilance towards their surroundings. It all depends.

NEXT BLANK SLIDE

The slightly desensitised board members seem less disturbed, although affected by it.

Miranda keeps a poker face.

WHITE TEMI (CONT'D)

This drawing has a lot more going on. The main attraction is of course the giant man with the head of a lion, wearing big boxing gloves.

It would appear he's just punched a slave to the ground for not kneeling, not showing gratitude.

A less-so-but-still reluctant slave has chosen to sit rather than kneel. His right hand stays behind his back, perhaps hiding a weapon of sorts.

Next to him a method-slave, playing his part in full by kneeling without questioning it.

MIRANDA

A coward!

WHITE TEMI

Not a coward no.

MIRANDA

Not a coward?--

WHITE TEMI

A broken man who's otherwise innocent.

MIRANDA

It all depends.

Temi tries to ignore her.

WHITE TEMI
Moving on.

Miranda makes a note on a piece of paper.

Temi zooms in on the right corner of the blank slide.

WHITE TEMI (CONT'D)
In the far right corner you'll
notice the only black man standing.
His little gloves are similar to
the ones worn by the lion-man.

From certain angles he looks like
Uncle Tom, an image that remains to
this day, forcing successful black
people to mind their steps.

Miranda interrupts.

MIRANDA
How dare you?

WHITE TEMI
What?

MIRANDA
You must realise, you're not in a
position to talk about that.

WHITE TEMI
Why not? I'm black.

Miranda's jaw drops.

The board members voice their disgust.

Temi feels revitalised.

WHITE TEMI (CONT'D)
(happy)
I'm a black man.

MIRANDA
You're out of your mind--

WHITE TEMI
(imitating Muhammad Ali)
I'm pretty--

MIRANDA

You're not that pretty!

WHITE TEMI

(shouting)

I'm a pretty black man.

MIRANDA

Stop it--

WHITE TEMI

It's part of my roots, don't you see. (he smiles) Colour doesn't matter. Once a black man always a black man.

You used to be black as well, all of you.

MIRANDA

(annoyed)

We know that--

WHITE TEMI

Yes but you don't know what to do with it.

The prosecution rests, for now, as Miranda pours a cup of tea.

The other board members tend to their discomfort.

Temi maintains his newfound happiness.

He readies the

NEXT BLANK SLIDE

A board member averts his eyes.

MIRANDA

That's pornography.

WHITE TEMI

It's an African goddess. Half-naked yes. Objectified by the white men in the back yes, but so are white women. This lady is not a slave.

The delicate board member finds the courage to gaze upon it.

WHITE TEMI (CONT'D)

In fact, she seems to be the one in control. The snake in front suggests she's a kind of Eve, a black Eve, no better or worse than white women.

NEXT BLANK SLIDE

WHITE TEMI (CONT'D)

The next drawing is painted by the same notion.

The blushing white man is sandwiched in between a beautiful black woman and a, forgive me, less attractive white woman with hair on her nose and chin.

The man uses his fish eyes to look in both directions, at the risk of choosing both women, thereby making two mistakes, since they are equals.

Temi looks around the room.

The board members look ready for a break.

He's about to continue but stumbles.

The sergeant walks in.

As he looks at the monitor, the blank screen confuses him, being the only one in the room who can't see the cartoons.

SERGEANT

Pardon me. I need to borrow Temi.

Baffled but compliant, Temi follows him out the door.

EXT. STREET - DAY

The sergeant guides Temi to the squad car.

Temi goes for the door handle...

Locked.

SERGEANT (CONT'D)

Put your hands behind your back.

WHITE TEMI

What's the problem?

The sergeant cuffs him.

SERGEANT

You know what the problem is.

Temi looks guilty.

WHITE TEMI

Tell me.

SERGEANT

Your friend came by the station.

Temi realises he's caught out and bows his head.

SERGEANT (CONT'D)

He was worried about you.

Temi nods, acknowledging defeat.

The sergeant tries to push him forward but in the end
Temi resists.

WHITE TEMI

Give me two hours to turn myself
in.

SERGEANT

(aggravated)

You don't have to turn yourself in.
It's just a fine.

WHITE TEMI

Are you mad? Then give me my hands
back.

SERGEANT

You ignorant twat, I'm taking you
in to get you out of here.

Temi tilts his head in defiance.

The sergeant sighs.

His fingers play with the keys.

As Temi awaits the verdict he gets an idea.

He turns around and takes a deep breath.

Then he leans back, knowing that the sergeant will catch him, but loses his nerve at the last second and returns to an upright position.

He tries again...same result.

His body language curses the lack of trust.

INT. POLICE STATION- DAY - FLASHBACK

CHIEF'S OFFICE

A white HANDYWOMAN plugs in the chief's new mini fridge.

The chief measures the dimensions of his lunch box.

The sergeant walk in, hands the chief a stack of documents.

CHIEF

Thank you sergeant.

SERGEANT

I have to get going. There's a silly man, in a park, rubbing mud in the eyes of desperate blind people.

CHIEF

I see. Go on then.

The sergeant heads for the door.

CHIEF

Mum wants us home by 7:30.

The sergeant agrees to the date with a hand gesture.

The handywoman takes notice.

She looks at the chief with inquisitive eyes.

CHIEF (CONT'D)

He's adopted, obviously.

HANDYWOMAN

Oh thank God.

The chief laughs, fully aware of innocent brain-farts.

HANDYWOMAN (CONT'D)

I was going nuts. My eyes told me
you were white, but my brain told
me to look for black.

He keeps laughing, making her chime in too.

END FLASHBACK

INT. BOARD ROOM - DAY

Temi reconnects the PC to the monitor.

WHITE TEMI

Okay, let's pick up the pace.

He taps the laptop.

The monitor brings up another

BLANK SLIDE

WHITE TEMI

This one shows a sweaty cartoonist
hunch forward as he draws the face
of the former King of Saudi Arabia,
Faisal bin Abdul-Aziz al Saud.

NEXT BLANK SLIDE

WHITE TEMI

A respectable goat herder leaves
the red sun behind him.

NEXT BLANK SLIDE

WHITE TEMI

A horns-and-all Viking dressed in a
traditional Arab ankle-length robe.

A few of the board members laugh politely.

Miranda stays quietly resentful.

NEXT BLANK SLIDE

WHITE TEMI

Standing by a blackboard in the classroom, a brown teenager sticks his tongue out after having written the following in Farsi:

'The journalists of Jyllandsposten are a bunch of reactionary provocateurs.'

A male board member kicks the leg of a chair.

Miranda scolds him with ice-cold eyes.

WHITE TEMI

The boy wears a stripy Crystal Palace shirt with writing on the chest. It's hard to make out but I think it says FRAMED.

NEXT BLANK SLIDE

The board members are terrified.

Temi continues unabashed.

WHITE TEMI

Finally, the only real controversial cartoon: Jesus dressed in a half-melted assault rifle attached to his head, with the caption:
'This is Jesus.'

Miranda shakes her head in a judging manner.

WHITE TEMI

On the surface, a lazy caricature aimed at average Christians. But notice how he's not looking straight at us, the receivers.

A board member clutches the pen so hard it breaks.

She panics and picks up the pieces.

WHITE TEMI

He's looking at the target, enticing us to join the attack on violent Christians;

(MORE)

WHITE TEMI (CONT'D)

Those who glued the gun to the head
of Jesus by killing in his name...
This is the fundamentalist version of
Jesus, a version that doesn't exist.

MIRANDA

The controversy came about, not
because of the weapon, but
because Jesus is black.

WHITE TEMI

Jesus is not black. I mean, of
course he's black, but you can't
tell by looking at him.

The room is not entirely sold on that.

MIRANDA

I know he's not black in real life
but the cartoonist made him black.

Temi double-checks the blank monitor.

Then he looks back at Miranda.

WHITE TEMI

Did he?

MIRANDA

Yes! Are you blind?

He takes another look at the monitor.

The board members don't quite know whom to agree with.

WHITE TEMI

I can't tell.

Miranda dumps her pen on the table in despair.

Temi goes through his blank notes.

The board members hunker down.

Pearls of sweat slide across Temi's forehead.

He squints his eyes, attempting to reenergise them.

ROMANTIC MUSIC

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

ROMANTIC MUSIC CONTINUES

CHIEF'S OFFICE

The chief wrinkles his nose at the vegetables in his lunchbox, pushing them away.

He rubs his stomach.

Then he gets up and walks to the

HALL

where he finds the vending machine full of candy bars.

While deciding, he scans the

RECEPTION

The receptionist tidies up her workstation.

She looks stunning in her tight dress and loose hair.

MUSIC FADES OUT

FOOTSTEPS APPROACHING

SERGEANT (OS)

I think you're absolutely gorgeous.

She acknowledges his compliment with a smile.

The sergeant looks hesitant like a teenage boy.

SERGEANT (CONT'D)

Do you still want to--

RECEPTIONIST

Sure.

SERGEANT

Yeah?

RECEPTIONIST

Of course!

SERGEANT

Super.

She laughs at him.

RECEPTIONIST

What took you so long?

SERGEANT

I had to work out the difference
between love and obsession.

RECEPTIONIST

And?

SERGEANT

I'm not sure... I was sort of
hoping you knew.

INT. BOARD ROOM - DAY

The monitor is turned off.

The laptop is flipped shut.

Miranda's alone with her thoughts.

The tired board members all look in her direction,
waiting for a decision.

Temi can't handle the suspense.

WHITE TEMI

Miranda... I'm scared too, but this
is about the children.

Miranda's eyes perk up.

MIRANDA

You're right. The children.

She's suddenly more responsive.

WHITE TEMI

We need to prepare them for an
increasingly complex world after
school. A world that sometimes
ignores your feelings.

The board members nod.

Miranda writes it down.

WHITE TEMI (CONT'D)

If you're still not convinced, let it be known that the father of pictorial satire had a dog, named Trump.

SPITEFUL LAUGHING

Temi looks pleased.

He closes the computer and turns off the monitor.

The board members stretch their legs.

Miranda reads her thoughts on a blank piece of paper.

INT. TEMI'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

LIVING ROOM

Temi has fallen asleep in the armchair.

TEMI'S DREAM

EXT. PARK - DAY

SUNNY DAY

Black Temi enters the park

A dog rests on the grass, licking his balls.

Next to the dog, a SHORT WHITE MAN kneels before five hefty black men.

The first hefty man climbs on top of him.

The short man struggles to keep balanced.

The second hefty man climbs on top of the first.

The third goes on top of the second, the forth on the third, and finally the fifth on top of all of them.

The short man at the bottom of the tower sweats profusely.

Eventually his knees begin to shake.

The five hefty men aren't bothered at all.

Black Temi pities the short white man.

They lock eyes.

SHORT WHITE MAN
I'm doing this for you mate.

Black Temi steps closer.

Black Temi sticks his hands out and tries to share the load with the short man.

Their height difference makes the tower tilt back and forth, like a tree taunted by the wind.

Ultimately the short man's knees buckle.

Tower falling... falling... falling...

CRASH

END TEMI'S DREAM

INT. APARTMENT COMPLEX - DAY

STAIRCASE, SECOND FLOOR

Temi double locks the door.

Opposite, black Mrs Blunt pokes her head out.

Temi smiles at her.

She throws a piece of junk mail at him.

BLACK MRS BLUNT
One of yours again... I'm keeping
the coupon.

Temi approaches her.

She turns suspicious.

He rests his arms on her shoulders.

She calms down a bit.

Then he gives her a big kiss on the cheek.

WHITE TEMI

Have a lovely day Mrs Blunt.

Her eyes follow him as he walks down the stairs.

BLACK MRS BLUNT

(whispering)

Have a good day neighbour.

She shuts the door.

CALM MUSIC

INT. PUBLISHING OFFICE - DAY

CALM MUSIC CONTINUES

CUBICLE

Simon bites his nails.

MAIN DOOR OPENS

MUSIC TURNS SUSPENSEFUL

Simon panics.

FOOTSTEPS APPROACHING.

Simon calms his breath.

He summons his courage.

Then he looks up.

Temi smiles at him.

MUSIC FADES OUT

Simon unties the knot in his stomach.

SIMON

How'd it go?

WHITE TEMI

Let's get a drink.

He grabs Simon's arm gently, helping him up.

INT. PUB - DAY

BAR

The well-dressed black man sits at one end. He's unscarred.

At the other end sits the rugged racist, with his face bruised and battered.

His armpits seem to have grown crutches.

A straw floats in the beer in front of him.

He leans in for a sip.

The waitress delivers a pitcher of milk, a cup of groundnuts, two glasses and four plates to

TEMI AND SIMON'S BOOTH

Temi helps her unload it.

He fills two of the plates with groundnuts.

SIMON

Did they approve of the idea?

Temi hands him an empty plate and grabs his own.

WHITE TEMI

Watch me.

Temi places the empty plate above the other one and starts grinding the groundnuts.

CRUNCHY SOUNDS

SIMON

Is that peanuts?

WHITE TEMI

Not peanuts. Groundnuts.

SIMON

They remind me of peanuts.

Temi acknowledges the observation.

WHITE TEMI

Same-same.

He checks on Simon's progress.

Simon tries to copy his moves.

SLIGHTLY LOUDER CRUNCHY SOUNDS

SIMON

So, what did they say?

CRUNCHY SOUNDS CONTINUE

WHITE TEMI

The trick is to finish before the
milk gets warm.

Feeling playful, they start competing.

CRUNCHY SOUNDS ESCALATE FURTHER

They eye each other.

WHITE TEMI (CONT'D)

Concentrate.

Simon puts his back into it.

Temi smiles approvingly and pushes on.

INT. COMEDY CLUB - NIGHT

STAGE

The two Ofcom-commentators are on their little stools.

There's no comedian on stage, just a lonely microphone.

The crowd gets edgy and impatient.

Commentator #1 signals #2.

Commentator #2 walks up to the performer's microphone.

CROWD CHEERING

CLAPPING

STAMPING

COMMENTATOR #2

Let's go through it again... I want you to press the white button if you feel personally offended.

In case of political bias, press the red one... If you end up laughing at a joke you find distasteful, kill yourself.

Commentator #1 grunts at him.

COMMENTATOR #2 (CONT'D)

Sorry, press the blue-and-yellow button, and then kill yourself.

BLUE BACKGROUND, YELLOW LETTERS:

"I believe that irony and self-irony are the most appropriate form of interacting with our world; it's a way of overcoming gravity.

Through laughter we not only get rid of our fears, we also overcome our shortcomings.

- Dmytro Chekalkin"

The End